

MUCH RED TAPE ON THE ISTHMI

How Uncle Sam Loses \$20,000 a Day While Congress Haggles Over Price of Waffle Irons.

TIME ELEMENT OF PROBLEM

Story of the Twelve Whitewash Brushes—Business Administration Needed.

By Frank G. Carpenter.

(Special Correspondence of The Times-Dispatch.)

PANAMA, April 16.—Uncle Sam is like to lose millions through the Miss Nancys of Congress before the canal is completed. They have already begun their investigations of the petty emergency purchases made by the canal commission, and they insist that everything shall be done by slow government methods backed by congressional action. Such methods are all right in ordinary government business but, just now, they are like great iron balls chained to the legs of the engineers regarding their work at an enormous cost in money and, I might almost say, in life as well. Farther on in this letter I shall show how such delays have affected the hospitals and how they are retarding the actual work on the canal. At this initial stage the government cannot afford to be penny wise and pound foolish. The work is already started, and the high-priced men are on the ground. There is an immediate need for all sorts of supplies, and emergencies are bound to come from time to time which will demand the immediate expenditure of comparatively large sums at a moment's notice. On such occasions minor mistakes may occur, a few men may make more than an ordinary profit, but the saving in money and health will be enormous.

A Loss of \$20,000 a Day.

The parents who have boys on the isthmus will be interested in the matter of health. The taxpayers are interested in pushing the work on the canal; for every day of delay will cost them at least \$20,000. We are to spend on the canal, including the money we have already given, the sum of \$400,000,000, and it is estimated that it will take from ten to twelve years to build it. At 3 per cent the annual interest cost on that sum will be equal to \$20,000,000, but as the money will be gradually invested, the loss of more than \$20,000,000 from beginning to end, and it will be only half the above sum or \$4,500,000 a year. The engineers tell me that the cost of the engineering, administration, sanitation and general expenses, which will be about the same throughout the work, will approximate \$2,000,000 a year, which, added to the \$4,500,000, makes \$6,500,000 for these two elements, for each year it is building. This is the time value of the work. The moment that the canal is done, this expense stops and the canal becomes a live account instead of a dead one on our national ledger.

Now, six and a half million dollars, divided by 300, means \$20,000 for each working day. That is what the canal delay will cost us year in and year out. For every day that Congress haggles over the price we shall have to spend \$20,000. Every working hour will cost us \$2,000, and every working minute means a loss of more than \$200, that loss going at the rate of 50 cents per second at every watch tick the working day through.

Is this the time to haggle about the cost of waffle irons, muffs, tin, hospital supplies and blue, print paper for the use of the engineers?

Red Tape at Panama.

Indeed, Congress is making such a fuss about the petty items of expense at Panama that both the commission and the engineers are afraid to buy the waffle irons without a lot of red tape that makes their actual cost ten times as great as though they were bought at double prices. We are building and repairing something like three thousand houses here. The other day an order was sent to Washington for twelve thousand doors to be forwarded immediately. The Panama Department of Material and Supplies advised that they be purchased in the open market, but one of the commission's clerks told me that they would not dare to do so, for Congress would surely investigate such an outrageous action. Other orders have been made for pickles and shovels, orders for water pipes, machinery, large and small, and for a hundred other things which the work imperatively needs; but ships come and ships go, and the supplies are not here. I understand that orders were sent in for blue print paper months ago. All drawings and engineering reports are copied on this paper, and it is almost a necessity to the furtherance of the work. I suppose it will come in time.

As to the waffle irons and muffs, time, money and of course the commission in the government service. A very pertinent one, which, however, I do not believe, is the story of the twelve whitewash brushes. According to this one of the sanitary officers in the hospital, the zone had sent in an order for twelve men to come to his station to do some whitewashing to make the place sanitary, and at the same time he sent in a requisition for twelve whitewash brushes. The men came all right, but the order for the whitewash brushes had to pass through the government mills and the clerks in charge first mailed a query to the sanitary agent as to whether nine whitewash brushes in the purpose. It will need all sorts of ranks and kitchen supplies, and I suppose the Miss Nancys of Congress will demand that each stove lid and stove holder be duly advertised for competitive bids, while in the meantime our good American laborers may do their cooking on stoves.

As far as I can see there is no extravagance here. The chief clerk among the men at the port are not an account of personal discomfort, but from the delay which occurs in the lack of tools for expediting their work.

The Story of the Twelve Whitewash Brushes.

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I might also tell the story of a feather dunder, upon which bids are alleged to have been gotten at the Panama shops and other stores, but such things are only illustrative of government methods which are better understood in Washington than here. The truth is the men at Panama use every means possible to

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A Great Exposition of the Season's Newest Merchandise.

WOMEN'S AND MISSES' READY-TO-WEAR GARMENTS

This Week—Temptation Prices Which Will Make This the Banner Selling Week in the History of OUR POPULAR SUIT DEPARTMENT.

Silk Counter News

Fancy Silks, nice for shirt waists and suits, yard... 25c to 98c
Crepes de Chine, in a large assortment of colors, yard... 50c
White Habutai Silks, in very rich lustre, and they wash beautifully, yard... 25c to \$1.00
Black Japanese Silks, yard... 37 1-2c to \$1.00
Colored Taffeta Silks, in plain, also illuminated; several colors we were out of we have now received; yard... 58c
Black Taffeta and Peau de Soie, 10 inches wide, yard... 49c

Spring Styles in Parasols.

Pongee Silk Parasols, with tucks and hemstitched; Taffeta Silk Parasols with tucks and hemstitched; Dresden, stripes, ombres, checks, all white and white with fancy borders.
From \$1.00 up to \$4.00 each.

Colored Umbrellas, in all colors, from... \$1.50 to \$3.50

Silk Suit Sale.

Special sale of China Silk and Taffeta Shirt-Waist Suits. This season's best models, at exceptionally low figures.

\$10.00—Taffeta Suits of brown, changeable taffeta; also plain striped taffetas, tucked waists, full skirted sleeves and kilts.

\$15.00—Changeable Taffetas and Shepherd's Plaid Suits, piped with contrasting shade; waists tucked in five clusters, full skirted skirts.

\$20.00—Taffeta Suits, in the new surprise effect; skirts full effects, tucked hips; regular \$25 value.

Sale of Sample Skirts.

In all wool crapes, imported flannels, voiles, chevrons and Panamas; light colors, also navy blues and blacks.

About fifty skirts in this lot, values \$5.00, \$6.48 and \$7.48, choice... \$3.48

The fashionable Mohair Skirt is shown in black, brown, navy, green and white; kilts, accordion plaited and flounce effects.

The Panama Skirt is stylish, serviceable and light weight, and will always hold sway with the well dressed woman.

Shepherd's Plaid, Black, Navy, Brown and Herringbone stripes are shown, in all the newest effects... \$5.00 to \$15.00

Covert and Serge are the plain, tailor-made girl's favorites. These are made with kilts, bottom, stitched straps and tucked hips, giving the new extra full effect.

\$5.00 to \$15.00
Dressy Skirts, in voiles, taffetas, Panama and crepe de chine, \$5.48 to \$35.00

More Pretty Veilings.

The spring bonnet needs a fetching veil to set it off properly. Here's a fine showing at special prices:

New Tuxedo, Hairline and Fancy Net Mesh Veiling at, yard, 25c, 35c and 50c

New Chenille Dotted Tuxedo, in large and small dot, in plain or fancy Mesh Veiling, at, yard, 25c to 50c

New Chiffon Veilings, in black, white, brown, red, navy, green and the new changeable combinations, at special prices, yard, 25c, 35c and 50c

Tailor-Made Suits.

A variety of styles, in most select and becoming effects, at mid-season prices. Two specials:

At \$25.00—Shepherd's Plaid Suits, imported suiting, either jacket or blouse style, with flounce or kilts skirt; former prices, \$30.00 and \$35.00.

At \$20.00—Black and White Shepherd's Plaid Suits, full blouse effect, piped with green or black, skirt tucked hips and plaited flounce; a splendid seller at \$25.

New China Silk Waists.

Every conceivable style is here represented—plain tucked effects, lingerie and eyelet embroidery, either button back or front.

China Silk Waists, fine tucked fronts, finished with silk French knots and embroidered box plait down center; full sleeve... \$2.08

China Silk Waists, deep tucks down front; also Val lace trimmed, tucked sleeves... \$3.98

China Silk Waists, entire front of eyelet embroidery, tucked backs; others yoke of Val lace and tucks, fancy trimmed sleeves, \$5.00

Special News from Men's Counter

Men's Best Quality White Plaited and White Lace Bosom Shirts; also Eclipse White Laundered Dress Shirts, for, each... 08c
48c boys Men's Fine White Madras, also White Plaited Shirts, that are good 60c and 75c values.

25c for Men's Fine Gauze Lisle Black, Tan, White and Navy Socks, good 35c qualities.

12 1-2c for Pretty Silk Embroidered Socks, that you can't tell from 25c ones.

23c Neckwear—Are the newest shapes, best makes, in solid colors, four-in-hands; also Rumshundas and pretty 50c Fancy Silks.

Boys' Blouses and Shirt Waists, in pretty madras, with or without collars, in neat effects and colored grounds, at, each... 48c

Newest Belts and Girdles.

50c for Silk Belts, with three shirrings in the back and wide fronts; colors, black, white, navy, brown, green and red; worth 75c.

75c for Heavy Peau de Cygne Shirrings and Plates, black only; worth \$1.00.

\$1.00 for Peau de Soie, three shirrings on both back and front to form deep girldo effect; worth \$1.50.

\$1.25 for Messaline Taffeta Belt, with five shirrings; colors, black, white, blue and cream; worth \$2.00.

\$1.50 for Liberty Satin Girdle, with eleven shirrings; colors, red, sea, cadet, green, brown, black, white; worth \$2.25.

Richmond's Best Kid Gloves.

For \$1.50—The "Carlton" Two-Clasp Glove Kid, over seam and Paris point embroidery, in black and white.

The "Marvel" Washable Kid, Paris point embroidery, in tan, mode, gray and pearl.

\$1.00—The "Sovereign" and "Autrey" Two-Clasp Glove Kid, in all the leading shades—navy, green, champagne, mode, tan and brown.

New Fabric Gloves.

Our stock of Silk Gloves is most complete. We have every desirable shade, including white, tan, black, gray, modes, champagne. We can especially recommend our brand of Silk Gloves for excellent wearing qualities. The fingers are well shaped and free from the usual bungling effects; prices... 50c and \$1.00

Sale of Ladies' Neckwear.

At 25c Each. Lace and Lawn Stock Collars, Silk Embroidery Stock Collars, Hand-Made Fagot Stitch Stock Collars, Canvas Stock Collars, with or without long tab; Embroidered Turnover Collars, in white and colors, with or without ribbon slide.

At 50c Each. Pompadour Embroidered Stock Collars, in white and light blue; Linen Stock Collars, with hemstitching and French knots, in all colors; Silk Tailored Stocks, in white and colors; Embroidered Net Stock Collars, Fine Mull Stocks, with plaited jabot of lace; Embroidered Collar and Cuff Sets, in new scroll designs; Chemisettes of dainty Val lace insertion and edge; Fine Point Gaze Stock Collars.

Also a choice line of Fine Hand-Made Stocks of lace, mousseline and linen, studded with gold and steel beads and jewels, and finished with lace medallions and French knots; Fine Collar and Cuff Sets, for coats, in plique and Irish embroidery and lace. Prices 75c, \$1.00, \$1.50.

LADIES' AND CHILDREN'S

Summer Underwear Sale

Ladies' Gauze Lisle or Mercerized Vests, lace or crochet trimmed, each... 50c

Richelieu Lisle, in pink, blue and cream, several different styles; your choice, each... 25c

Ladies' 25c Gauze Lisle, silk tape, slightly imperfect; 17c each, three for... 50c

Jersey Ribbed Corset Covers, corset fitting at back and bust, low neck and sleeveless, lace trimmed... 25c and 50c

Ladies' Ribbed Vests, lisle finish, extra sizes, each, 6c, 8c, 10c and 12 1-2c

Union Suits for ladies, low neck and knee pants, light or umbrella, lace or crochet trimmed... 50c, 75c and \$1.00

Also Jersey Ribbed Pants, cotton or lisle thread, knee or ankle length, lace trimmed, all sizes... 25c, 50c and 65c

Boys' Balbriggan Shirts and Drawers, long or short sleeves, knee or ankle lengths; special, each... 25c

Newest of Laces and Trimmings.

It is indeed impossible to find a more truly elegant assortment of fine Laces in Richmond than we are displaying for trimming Easter costumes—Venise, Irish Crochet, Valenciennes, Applique, Chantilly, Point Gaze, Oriental and Net Top Laces, in Allovers, Insertions, Edges, Collars and Gallons, at popular prices. Dress Trimmings, in Jets, Spangles, Appliques and Persian Silks and Mohairs, in endless variety, in the latest and most approved patterns.

TAPERING WAIST R.G. CORSETS

We show many new styles in this latest model of the famous R. and G. make.

They give the desired tapering shapeliness to the waist demanded by the spring fashion.

PRICES \$1 to \$3

All R. and G. Corsets, whatever the price, are guaranteed to give satisfaction in every detail.



Special Hosiery Sale.

Ladies' Black and Tan Lace Gauze Lisle Hose, good 35c value, for, pair... 25c

Ladies' 50c Lace Boot and All-over Lace Hose, in black and tan, at this sale, pair... 35c

Ladies' 75c Lace Mercerized Lisle Hose, very thin, in black and champagne, for, pair... 25c

Ladies' 50c Plain Gauze Lisle Hose, in black and tan, for, pair... 20c

Children's 16 2-3c Black Ribbed Hose, special, a pair... 12 1-2c

Infants' Black Lace Hose, that were 25c and 35c, to close out, pair... 10c and 12 1-2c

Men's 17c Plain Black and Tan Socks; also Fancy Silk Embroidered Hose; special, pair... 12 1-2c

White Goods Bargains.

50c and 60c Embroidered Madras, at... 35c

Our 39c Embroidered and Striped Madras we are offering at, per yard... 25c

25c Mercerized Madras at, yard... 15c

SPECIAL—36-inch Checked Pajama Cloths, only, yard... 12 1-2c

get what they want for their work. Some of the employees even take money out of their own pockets and buy at the stores, trusting to be paid back in the future. The French supplies and machinery on hand have been of enormous value, and the French warehouses are ransacked to supply many deficiencies.

A Business Administration.

Indeed the enormous interest and working cost of building the canal demand that it should be pushed to completion as rapidly as possible. We need a modern business administration with modern business methods. We need men who will look at the commercial side of every proposition, as well as the technical and political sides.

In order to shorten the time we should first adopt a careful, well considered and comprehensive general scheme of work and then have an administration which will see that the labor, material and machinery necessary to vigorously prosecute their work are promptly furnished.

Harbor at Colon, Where Supplies are Landed.

Some of the most serious delays, caused, I suppose, by advertisements for bus, have been in supplying the hospitals. Several of the doctors have told me that they have been out of important drugs for a considerable time, but it was not until this morning that I had a detailed statement as to the lack of medical and surgical necessities. My informant is one of the American trained nurses who has been employed at Ancon for several months. Said she:

"We have had great trouble in getting things of all kinds on time. When the Americans took hold supplies were sent down for a hospital of 100 beds. We have now 800 beds in use and proportionate increase in supplies. This means

a lack of basins, rubber sheeting, lamps and lanterns. We have had only a few temperature thermometers. In my ward I had twenty-three patients and in order to get a thermometer to take their temperature I had to go to another ward to borrow one. This was the case in other wards, and it so resulted that in one ward up temperature was taken from 1 P. M. until 5 A. M. the next day. The nurse in charge of that ward would have had to go out in the dark, down the hill, through the trees to another ward to borrow a thermometer. She was afraid and did not go, and I don't blame her. Such thermometers cannot cost more than 50 cents apiece at wholesale.

"Another thing we needed but could not get," the nurse went on, "was absorbent cotton and gauze. We ordered it from the United States, but it takes a month to get an ordinary purchase through, and for weeks we lacked this

trained nurse at Panama?"

"It is not an easy one and it is poorly paid," was the reply. "We nurses came here on the understanding that we should have all our expenses and \$50 a month. We got \$50 but there are so many incidents that there is very little of our pay left at the end of the month. We live at Ancon and have to have a cab every time we go to Panama to shop. This costs us about a dollar a time, and the result is from \$5 to \$10 a month goes in cab fares. And then the washing. Only the uniforms can be done up at the hospital laundry, and all the small articles that a woman must have, such as handkerchiefs, laces, fine dresses, etc., must be washed outside. This costs on the average about \$5 per month. In addition there are many other expenses, so that all told, one makes much less here than at home."

"The truth is, the salary of a trained nurse at Panama, should be \$75 or \$100 per month, everything included. I think the nurses would be satisfied with \$75, but, considering the work, the task, health and the distance from home, \$100 a month is little enough. Such a salary would raise the standard of the nurses here, and would bring the best. As it is now we are paid too little. Indeed, we get \$25 per week when we are in private families in the United States, and that usually in rich families where the comforts are far greater than here."

"How many nurses are there at Panama?"

"I should say about forty, and of these two-thirds are Americans and the rest Canadians. They are all fairly good, but it is claimed that the salary is so low that the very best American trained nurses will not come. We have nurses from Johns Hopkins, the University of Pennsylvania or the Blockley Training School of Philadelphia. We have some from Bellevue Hospital, New York, but none from the other large and well-known hospitals of the city or Washington. Some of our nurses have served in Cuba and the Philippines, and we have one who went with Dr. Anita McGee to Japan and nursed in the hospitals there. The nurses are all conscientious, and they all earn their salaries several times over."

Jamaica Negroes as Patients.

"I give me some idea of the character of your patients?"

"I don't like to speak about that," said the nurse. "That is a sore subject with us. I am a southern woman, and while I might possibly not object to the color line with Booker T. Washington, I would object to nursing the black servant who dug ditches in Bonker T. Washington's back yard. Most of the wards here are filled with the negro, many of them laborers, men who receive 15 cents to a dollar a day. They are largely Jamaica negroes, as black as a stove, and native Panamanians, many of whom mulattoes. We have ten wards here, and of these only one is devoted to the American employes on the canal; the other nine are occupied by the people I have described. They are of a lower class than can be found in the charity wards of our city hospitals. Some of them have diseases which are loathsome to an extreme. The patients are almost all men, and many of them are such that a woman should not be asked to touch them."

More Money Needed for Sanitation.

I understand that more money is needed here for sanitation. The sanitary officers asked for \$2,000,000 to clean up the isthmus, but they were given only one-fourth that amount. They estimated that it would take \$75,000 to clean Panama, and about one-third that sum was

allowed. The supplies needed have been promptly ordered, but the necessity of advertising for bids has caused a delay in the orders being filled, and a delay in the hospitals have gotten along as well as they could, patronizing to some extent the Panama drug stores at considerably higher prices than similar orders would cost in the United States. It seems to me that the sanitary force here is excellent. The corps of doctors embraces some of the best men of their profession, and both doctors and nurses are doing earnest and conscientious work.

As to the matter of supplies, one of the doctors recommends that a medical purveyor be put at the head of the medical supply department for Panama at New York, and that he be paid \$3,000 a year. This man would be in close communication with the hospitals here and would keep in touch with the markets at home. He would see that Panama has always a full month's hospital supplies in advance, and a large enough reserve supply to meet any emergency. Indeed, some such provision would seem to be almost a necessity in the present condition of the isthmus.

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Looks Better Now.

P. S.—Since writing the above, the news has come that President Roosevelt has reorganized the Canal Commission, and that the chief engineer will be given full authority at this end of the line while Commissioner Shonts, a practical railroad man, will have charge of ordering supplies and all other work in the United States. This means a business administration, and that the chief engineer will be given full authority at this end of the line while Commissioner Shonts, a practical railroad man, will have charge of ordering supplies and all other work in the United States. This means a business administration, and that the chief engineer will be given full authority at this end of the line while Commissioner Shonts, a practical railroad man, will have charge of ordering supplies and all other work in the United States.

Nurses at Panama.

What kind of a position is that of

material to dress wounds and drain them. We used old mosquito netting for a time, and also bought cheese cloth of the Panama stores and tried that. The cheese cloth contained starch, and, when it became dry, it would make a covering over the wound standing out from it. I do not know that any injury resulted from this, but it was certainly a great annoyance to the doctors and nurses."

"How about drug supplies," I asked.

"We have been short of a number of important medicines at times. We have been entirely out of arsenic, strychnine, poison and digitalis, and also of iron, codine and similar drugs. One of the medicines we use is the elixir of quinine, iron and strychnine. We were once out of that for weeks, and it was the same with Fowler's solution of arsenic."

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